

Message Text

PAGE 01 MBFR V 00203 01 OF 02 181645Z

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ACTION ACDA-10

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INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

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USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0203

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: DE VOS APRIL 17, 1975 PRESS CONFERENCE
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

REF: MBFR VIENNA 0194

SUMMARY: DE VOS Q'S AND A'S IN WAKE OF PREPARED WESTERN
STATEMENT (MBFR VIENNA 0194) ALSO TENDED TO CENTER ON
DATA ISSUES. 30-35 MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES PARTICIPATING
DEALT KINDLY WITH SPOKESMAN. Q'S TOUCHED ON NUMBER OF
GENERAL ISSUES, INCLUDING WESTERN VIEW ON EASTERN
"ABSOLUTIST" INTERPRETATION OF MEANING OF PREPARATORY
COMMUNIQUE. TEXT OF Q'S AND A'S FOLLOW. END SUMMARY.

DE VOS APRIL 17, 1975 PRESS CONFERENCE, Q'S AND A'S
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PAGE 02 MBFR V 00203 01 OF 02 181645Z

1. Q. (LOS ANGELES TIMES) COULD YOU CLARIFY FOR US WHAT THE
INTENTION OF THE WESTERN POSITION IS WITH REGARD
TO THE COMMON CEILING AND ITS COLLECTIVE CHARACTER. IS
THIS A DEVICE TO PERMIT ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE ALLIES TO

INCREASE ITS FORCES AS OTHERS REDUCE?

A. WE HAVE PROPOSED THAT THE COMMON CEILING WHICH WE WOULD LIKE TO END WITH SHOULD HAVE A COLLECTIVE CHARACTER, BECAUSE WE FEEL THAT WE NEED THIS ON OUR SIDE, SINCE WE HAVE IN NATO AN INTEGRATED DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT. WE NEED CONTINUED FLEXIBILITY TO MAINTAIN THAT INTEGRATED CHARACTER FOR OUR DEFENSE EFFORTS, TO WORK TOWARDS SPECIALIZATION FOR INSTANCE. WE ALSO NEED THAT SORT OF FLEXIBILITY, WE FEEL AS I SAID IN MY STATEMENT, IN ORDER NOT TO PREJUDICE THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION. IT WOULD IN FACT MEAN THAT IF ONCE COUNTRY -- YOU CAN IMAGINE THIS ARISING IN AN ALLIANCE AND THIS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST FOR INSTANCE WITH THE ONSET OF ECONOMIC PROBLEMS -- AND IT NEEDS TO REDUCE ITS DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT, AT A CERTAIN TIME, OTHERS WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO COMPENSATE FOR THAT BY INCREASING IN THE SAME PROPORTION THEIR CONTRIBUTION, SO THAT THE OVERALL LEVEL WOULD OF COURSE REMAIN THE SAME. WE WOULD OF COURSE STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE OVERALL FIGURE ESTABLISHED BY THE COMMON CEILING. WE FEEL THAT THIS FLEXIBILITY WE HAVE AT THE PRESENT MOMENT IS AN ESSENTIAL ASPECT OF OUR SECURITY. AND IF WE WERE TO LOSE THAT KIND OF ARRANGEMENT, THAT KIND OF POSSIBILITY FOR FLEXIBILITY, WE WOULD POTENTIALLY DIMINISH OUR SECURITY. IF, FOR INSTANCE, AT SOME FUTURE MOMENT ONE COUNTRY ON OUR SIDE - AND I AM REALLY NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT OUR SIDE - WOULD FEEL THAT THERE IS AN OVERRIDING NEED TO REDUCE ITS FORCES, AND THE OTHERS WOULD NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE UP THE DEFICIT WHICH WE WOULD THEN HAVE, WE WOULD JUST INTRODUCE A NEW DESTABILIZING FACTOR. THIS WOULD NOT BE VERY HELPFUL TO THE SITUATION WHICH WE ARE TRYING TO BRING ABOUT THROUGH THESE NEGOTIATIONS HERE.

2. Q. (FINANCIAL PRESS) DOES THE WESTERN SIDE AT ALL ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF NATIONAL SUBCEILINGS? OR DO YOU REJECT THIS CONCEPT? OR ARE YOU JUST SAYING THEY MUST UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 MBFR V 00203 01 OF 02 181645Z

NOT BE TOO LOW.

A. WE REJECT IT. WE DON'T THINK THAT THERE SHOULD BE SUCH CEILINGS. WE FEEL THAT A COMMON CEILING IS AN ADEQUATE ARRANGEMENT GUARANTEEING SECURITY FOR BOTH SIDES. THERE IS OF COURSE AN EXCEPTION FOR THE BIG POWERS ON BOTH SIDES, WHICH WE THINK ARE IN A SPECIAL CATEGORY, WHOSE TOTAL DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT IS MUCH LARGER THAN THE RELATIVELY SMALL PART THEY HAVE IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS, AND WHOSE TOTAL SIZE OF FORCES WOULD NOT BE LIMITED BY ANY AGREEMENT. THEY ARE IN A SPECIAL CATEGORY, AND IT WOULD BE REASONABLE TO PROVIDE THAT THEY WOULD NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO REINTRODUCE FORCES INTO THE AREA ONCE THEY HAVE WITHDRAWN THEM.

3. Q. (ARBEITER ZEITUNG) AS AN OUTSIDE OBSERVER ONE HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE AT AN IMPASSE. DO YOU THINK THAT AN OUTSIDE EVENT, FOR EXAMPLE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN BREZHNEV AND FORD OR SOMETHING OF THIS SORT, COULD HELP YOU TO GET OUT OF THIS IMPASSE?

A. WELL, FIRST OF ALL I WOULD SAY THAT THE TALKS ARE NOT AN IMPASSE. THEY ARE NOT MOVING VERY FAST, BUT I WOULD NOT SAY THAT THEY REALLY ARE AT AN IMPASSE. BOTH SIDES MAKE SERIOUS EFFORTS TO FIND A SOLUTION SO AS TO MAKE SOME ADVANCE IN THESE DISCUSSIONS. WE HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN THAT IT WILL TAKE A LOT OF TIME. WE WOULD OF COURSE PREFER TO HAVE HAD THEM PROCEED A LITTLE BIT FASTER THAN THEY HAVE. WE STILL FEEL, WE ARE HOPEFUL, THAT WE CAN CONTINUE OUR DIALOGUE. OF COURSE, IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT OUTSIDE EVENTS MAY STIMULATE THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES SHOULD BE BIG ENOUGH TO HAVE BOTH PARTIES MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO MOVE AHEAD.

4. Q. (LA TIMES) WHILE WE ARE ON THAT, MR. AMBASSADOR, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD REPEATEDLY THAT THERE IS NO CONNECTION BETWEEN THIS CONFERENCE AND THE GENEVA SECURITY CONFERENCE. ALMOST JUST AS REPEATEDLY WE HAVE BEEN TOLD REALLY NOT TO EXPECT ANYTHING HERE UNTIL AFTER THE HELSINKI RIBBONS ARE ALL ON THE DOCUMENT. WHAT ABOUT THAT, AND IF IT IS SO, WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER JUST TO CONTINUE THIS RECESS UNTIL SEPTEMBER?

A. I CAN ONLY SAY THAT WE SEE NO REASONS WHATSOEVER TO UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 MBFR V 00203 01 OF 02 181645Z

WAIT FOR CSCE OR ANY OTHER OUTSIDE EVENT. MATTERS HERE ARE COMPLETELY OUTSIDE CSCE, BECAUSE WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID POLITICAL AND MILITARY DETENTE ARE COMPLEMENTARY. WE FEEL THAT HERE IN VIENNA WE HAVE THE TRUE TESTING AREA FOR THE SERIOUS, GENUINE DESIRES OF BOTH PARTIES -- INCLUDING THE EASTERN SIDE -- TO MOVE AHEAD AND ACHIEVE SOMETHING IN THE FIELD OF MILITARY SECURITY. I WOULD SAY THAT DETENTE IS NOT DETERMINED ONLY BY WHAT HAPPENS IN GENEVA. THE TRUE MEASURE OF DETENTE WILL TO A LARGE EXTENT BE DETERMINED BY WHAT WE ACHIEVE HERE IN VIENNA.

5. Q. (FINANCIAL TIMES) MR. AMBASSADOR, WOULD YOU THINK THAT PERHAPS NOT THE EVENTS IN GENEVA, BUT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA MIGHT HAVE SOME INDIRECT REFERENCE TO THE CONFERENCE HERE. CAN YOU COMMENT ON THE STATEMENTS MADE BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS THAT THE INVASION OF THE SOUTH HAS PUT INTO QUESTION THE COMMITMENT OF THE AMERICANS TO ITS ALLIES?

A. IT IS NOT UP TO ME HERE IN MY CAPACITY TO COMMENT ON THAT KIND OF ASPECT. I WOULD FROM MY POINT OF VIEW HERE, FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, SAY THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS ARE TRYING TO DEAL WITH THE ENORMOUS PROBLEM OF THE MILITARY

CONFRONTATION IN EUROPE. AS FAR AS I CAN SEE, BOTH SIDES RETAIN AN INTEREST IN FINDING SOME WAYS OF REDUCING THIS, SO THAT WE CAN REDUCE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE RISK OF ACTUAL MILITARY CONFLICT BREAKING OUT HERE IN THIS AREA.

6. Q. (CBS NEWS) WHAT IS THE REAL MEANING OF THIS RECESS? ISN'T IT A SIGN THAT YOU ARE AT A STALEMATE, OR AT AN IMPASSE, AND THAT BOTH SIDES ARE NOW GOING TO DISCUSS POSSIBLY SOME NEW CONCESSIONS?

A. WELL, THIS IS JUST A ROUTINE MATTER. WE HAVE ALWAYS HAD A RECESS IN THE SPRING, THEN ONE IN THE SUMMER, AND AT CHRISTMAS. THIS IS A ROUTINE PROCEDURE

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PAGE 01 MBFR V 00203 02 OF 02 181659Z

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0203

FROM US REP MBFR

ESTABLISHED NOW. SO THERE IS NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT IT. (YOU DON'T EXPECT ANY CHANGE, OR ANY CONCESSION WHEN YOU COME BACK, OR ANY NEW ISSUES?) AS I SAID IN MY STATEMENT, WE HOPE THAT THE OTHER SIDE WILL MAKE SOME EFFORTS TO MAKE MOVES ALONG THE LINES WE HAVE MADE. WE HAVE MADE SOME USEFUL MOVES. WE HOPE THAT THE OTHER SIDE WILL RECIPROCATATE. (THAT MEANS THAT YOU ARE NOT GOING TO CHANGE YOUR OWN POSITIONM) WE FEEL THAT WE HAVE MADE SOME GOOD MOVES, SOME CONSTRUCTIVE MOVES. WE HOPE THAT THE OTHER SIDE WILL COME TO RECOGNIZE THAT WE HAVE MADE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO MEET CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY THEM. WE HAVE MADE A SERIOUS EFFORT IN THAT

WAY TO MOVE THE NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD. WE HOPE THAT THEY WILL SEE THAT THIS KIND OF MOVEMENT, IF YOU WANT TO GET SOMEWHERE, CANNOT BE ONESIDE ONLY, BECAUSE IT MUST COME FROM BOTH SIDES. IT MUST BE A MUTUAL MOVEMENT. (IT LOOKS LIKE IT IS GOING TO BE THE SAME BALLGAME, BECAUSE THE OTHERS SAID THE SAME THING.) AT THE MOMENT I AM EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL RECONSIDER THEIR UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 MBFR V 00203 02 OF 02 181659Z

POSITION.

7. QAM (FINANCIAL TIMES) MR AMBASSADOR, WOULD YOU RULE OUT ABSOLUTELY THE POSSIBILITY THAT TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND AIRCRAFT WILL BE INTRODUCED BY THE WESTERN SIDE?

A. THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF CONJECTURE ABOUT THAT. I WOULD SAY THAT OUR POSITION STILL IS THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS HERE SHOULD FOCUS ON THE REDUCTION OF THE DISPARITIES, THE GREAT DISPARITIES, IN GROUND FORCES, WHICH FAVOR THE WARSAW PACT TO SUCH A LARGE EXTENT. THIS IS THE CENTRAL ISSUE, THE CENTRAL PROBLEM IN THE SECURITY SITUATION IN EUROPE AT THE MOMENT. WE THINK THE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THAT PROBLEM. IF WE CAN MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO SOLVING THAT PROBLEM WE WILL IN THAT WAY MAKE THE MOST DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS NOT ONLY PREVENTING AND REDUCING THE RISK OF CONFLICT BREAKING OUT, BUT ALSO REDUCING THE ASSOCIATED RISK OF NUCLEAR ESCALATION.

8. Q. (DIE PRESSE) YOU STRESSED IN YOUR SPEECH THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO AGREE ON LIMITING MILITARY EXERCISES AND FORCE MOVEMENTS. NOW THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN DISCUSSED IN GENEVA, AND IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT WE WILL PROGRESS THERE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. NOW DO YOU EXPECT THAT IF ANY AGREEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED ON THIS ISSUE, THAT THIS COULD BE ADOPTED BY THE WESTERN SIDE?

A. THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE AS TO WHAT IS BEING DISCUSSED IN GENEVA AND WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DISCUSS HERE. GENEVA IS IN ANOTHER CONTEXT. THERE ARE 35 NATIONS INVOLVED; THE COMMITMENTS WOULD BE LESS BINDING; THEY WOULD BE MORE RELATED TO POLITICAL COMMITMENTS, TO CREATING POLITICAL CONFIDENCE. THE COMMITMENTS THERE WOULD BE LESS RESTRICTIVE, LESS BINDING IN A JURIDICAL SENSE. HERE WE WOULD HAVE AN ACTUAL CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, WE HOPE. GENEVA WOULD ALSO BE LESS SPECIFIC; ITS AGREEMENT WOULD BE MORE OF A GENERAL NATURE. HERE WE ARE TRYING TO GET SOME MORE SPECIFICS, SOME MORE DETAILED ARRANGEMENT. SO IT IS NOT ALTOGETHER COMPARABLE. IF SOMETHING CAN BE ACHIEVED IN GENEVA, THAT WOULD MAKE US MORE HOPEFUL THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE SOMETHING HERE ALSO. BUT IT IS NOT A GUARANTEE THAT UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 MBFR V 00203 02 OF 02 181659Z

WE WOULD MAKE PROGRESS HERE, BECAUSE WHAT WE ARE DISCUSSING HERE IS OF A DIFFERENT NATURE.

9. Q. (APA) THE EASTERN SIDE MAINTAINS THAT THE PREPARATORY TALKS HAS A SECTION WHERE IT SAYS THAT YOU SHOULD TALK ABOUT FORCES AND ARMAMENTS. THEY MAINTAIN THAT YOU EVADE THIS. WOULD YOU COMMENT ON THAT?

A. ALL THAT WE AGREED WAS TO DISCUSS IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS IS THE REDUCTION OF ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS. THAT IS WHAT THE COMMUNIQUE SAYS. WE HAVE HAD NO DISCUSSION IN THE PREPARATORY TALKS ABOUT ANY SPECIFIC INTERPRETATION OF THAT TERMINOLOGY. THE ONLY THING WE AGREED TO AT THAT TIME WAS THAT THE NAVAL FORCES WOULD BE EXCLUDED. THAT IS SELF-EVIDENT. THEIR ACTIVITIES DO NOT RELATE TO THE AREA ITSELF, BUT TO THE SEAS AND OCEANS AROUND THE AREA. AS FOR THE REST, WE HAVE HAD NO DISCUSSION ON THIS. AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT IF THERE HAD BEEN A DISCUSSION, AND THE OTHER SIDE HAD MADE CLEAR AT THAT TIME ITS INTENTION THAT BOTH GROUND AND AIRFORCES WOULD HAVE TO BE INCLUDED, WE WOULD JUST NOT HAVE SIGNED SUCH AN AGREEMENT WITHOUT AT LEAST MAKING A VERY SPECIFIC RESERVATION AS FAR AS THAT IS CONCERNED. THE EASTERN SIDE HAS A LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO DEFEND ITS INTERPRETATION OF THAT FORMULA IN THE COMMUNIQUE, BUT IT IS NOT VERY SCIENTIFIC AND VERY REALISTIC TO ASSUME THAT JUST BY ACCEPTING THAT COMMUNIQUE, ONE SIDE CAN MAKE A VERY EXTENSIVE INTERPRETATION OF THAT COMMUNIQUE.

10. Q. (LA TIMES) MR AMBASSADOR, WHAT IS THE WESTERN POSITION AS REGARDS TO THE NECESSITY OF AGREEING TO THE FACTS OF THE PROBLEM, BEFORE YOU AGREE TO THE MODALITIES OR PERCENTAGES, OR NUMBERS? ARE WE PREPARED TO GO AHEAD ON PERCENTAGES OR THINGS LIKE THAT?

A. WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT PERCENTAGES, THE FIRST QUESTION IS: PERCENTAGE OF WHAT? (WELL, YOU CAN ALWAYS AGREE ON PERCENTAGES) WE FEEL THAT WE SHOULD KNOW IN CONCRETE TERMS WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT. IT IS THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH YOU CAN MEASURE THE WAY IN WHICH ANY AGREEMENT WILL AFFECT YOUR SECURITY, HOW ANY AGREEMENT MEASURES UP TO THE STANDARD OF UNDIMINISHED SECURITY -- BY LOOKING AT THE CONCRETE FACTS. (BUT IS THAT THE FORERUNNER OF EVERYTHING ELSE. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU HAVE TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT ON FACTS FIRST?) OUR POSITION IS THAT YOU CAN HAVE SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS,
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 MBFR V 00203 02 OF 02 181659Z

OF COURSE, BUT YOU CANNOT AGREE ON PRINCIPLES IF YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT THESE PRINCIPLES MEAN IN TERMS OF CONCRETE FACTS. YOU HAVE TO HAVE AT LEAST A COMMON LANGUAGE ON WHAT FACTS YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT. THAT IS OUR OBJECTION. IT SEEMS TO US SELF-EVIDENT THAT YOU CANNOT MAKE ANY KIND OF AGREEMENT WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT IS GOING TO MEAN TO YOU IN CONCRETE TERMS. (IT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE SO SELF-EVIDENT TO THE OTHER SIDE.) WE STILL HOPE THAT WE CAN CONVINCE THEM.

11. Q. (FINANCIAL TIMES) IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, FIGURES AT THE FIRST SALT TALKS WERE INTRODUCED VERY LATE. IF THAT WAS THE CASE, AND THEY WERE ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER SIDE, IT WOULD OF COURSE BE POSSIBLE TO PROCEED IN A SIMILAR WAY HERE.

A. I AM NOT A SPECIALIST IN SALT NEGOTIATIONS, BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT WAS A LITTLE SIMPLER THERE. THE FIGURES WERE ALL KNOWN, OF COURSE. THEY WERE NOT ONLY BEING TALKED ABOUT AT A LATER STAGE; THERE WAS ACTUALLY LITTLE DISAGREEMENT IN VIEW OF THE WEAPONS SYSTEMS INVOLVED, AND THE MEANS OF RECONNAISSANCE AND OBSERVATION. I THINK IT WAS EASIER TO ESTABLISH THE FACTS. BUT ANY COMPARISON IS OF COURSE DIFFICULT FOR ME. I AM NOT A SPECIALIST ON THOSE TALKS. BUT AS FAR AS OUR TALKS HERE ARE CONCERNED, I CAN RESTATE THAT WE FEEL IT ESSENTIAL, BEFORE WE REALLY GET DOWN TO DETAILS OF ANY AGREEMENT, THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO KNOW WHAT IT REALLY MEANS IN CONCRETE TERMS.

12. Q. (AUSTRIAN TV) WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE REASON FOR THE EASTERN SIDE TO WITHHOLD THE FIGURES?

A. WE CAN JUST HOPE THAT IN DUE COURSE THEY CAN COME AROUND TO AGREE ON THAT. END TEXT.RESOR

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